


**Task:** Pick an Assessment and a Unit to assess the level of cognitive demand.

Following are some questions to consider when analyzing your curriculum tasks for DOK.

1. ***What level of work are the students most commonly required to perform?***
2. ***What is the complexity of the task rather than the difficulty?***
3. ***What are all the skills and knowledge scaffolding that the students will have already needed to build to complete the task?***

Make changes to your unit and assessment to increase the cognitive demand as you see appropriate. Use the slides below to assist you in the process.

## Some general rules of thumb



- **If there is only one correct answer, it is probably level DOK 1 or DOK 2**
  - DOK 1: you either know or you don't
  - DOK 2 (conceptual): apply one concept, then make a decision before going on *applying* a second concept
- **If more than one solution/approach, requiring evidence, it is DOK 3 or 4**
  - DOK 3: Must provide supporting evidence and reasoning (not just HOW solved, but WHY – explain reasoning)
  - DOK 4: all of “3” + use of multiple sources or texts

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## DOK is About Complexity

- The intended student learning outcome determines the DOK level.
- Assessments, oral questions and class activities can all be assigned a DOK level.
- Instruction and classroom assessments must reflect the DOK level of the objective or intended learning outcome.

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## **As you think about instructional activities, ask...**

- What is its purpose?
- What is the implied/intended rigor?
- When in the (lesson/unit) could this be used?
- Which standard(s) does it align with?
- Will student responses tell a teacher what to do next?

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## **Some implications for applying rigor to unit design:**

- What are the overall learning goals & expectations (and cognitive demand) of the unit?
- Does the cognitive demand of the assessments match the stated learning expectations?
- Do the learning activities in the unit have the coherence & increasing cognitive rigor to get students there?

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# DOK can also be applied to the questions we use

- Often struggling students are denied access to higher level questions because they still have difficulty with skills.
- However, higher level thinking questions are sometimes easier for level 1 & 2 students to answer because open-ended questions have more entry points and require more “think time” by the rest of the class.

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## DOK ????

- **Questions at lower levels are usually more appropriate for:**
  - Evaluating students' preparation and comprehension
  - Diagnosing students' strengths and weaknesses
  - Reviewing and/or summarizing
- **Usually questions at upper DOK levels are appropriate for:**
  - Encouraging students to think deeply and critically
  - Problem-solving
  - Encouraging discussions
  - Stimulating students to seek information on their own

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# You Can Ask Higher DOK Questions

- Require students to **manipulate prior information**
  - Why do you suppose... ..?
  - What can you conclude from the evidence?
- Ask students to state an idea or definition **in their own words**.
- Ask questions that **require a solution to a problem**.
- Involve students in **observing and describing** an event or object
  - What do you notice?      Tell me about this.      What do you see?
- Ask students to **compare or contrast**

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## Take-Away Message: Cognitive Rigor & Some Implications for Assessment

- Assessing only at the highest DOK level will miss opportunities to know what students do & don't know – go for a range; end “high” in selected/prioritized content
- Performance assessments can offer varying levels of DOK embedded in a larger, more complex task
- Planned formative assessment strategies and tools can focus on differing DOK levels

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